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To the familiar list that usually includes the war in Viet Nam, racial discrimination, capitalistic exploitation of the consumer, a breakdown in family structure, political corruption, the weakening position of organized religion, and a shift in the values of a large segment of society as supposed causes of campus unrest, the author adds the development of an economy, and society based on the exploitation of scientific knowledge with virtually no commensurate progress in the application of the social sciences to our political institutions and processes. As appropriate institutional responses to student unrest, he suggests (1) a thorough and critical examination of the philosophy and mission of the college, and of the extent to which all involved understand these concepts, (2) a reconsideration of the organization and application of the guidance services as they relate to the present generation of students, and (3) involvement of students, faculty, administration, and boards of trustees in the development of the policies and procedures of the institution. Appended is a proposal for a student disciplinary procedure. (MC)

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"DISSENT AND THE COLLEGE STUDENT IN REVOLT"

Presented to

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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF JUNIOR COLLEGES

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DISSENT AND THE COLLEGE STUDENT IN REVOLT

Clyde E. Blocker

The current student unrest on the American college campus has been discussed in such detail, using every method from reasoned logic to harsh invective, that it is difficult to think of a fresh way to begin a meaningful discussion of the problem. The quality of the discussion has varied from sheer rubbish to well-conceived suggestions for remediation. In the interest of economy of time, I will resist the temptation to discuss the causes of our current situation in detail. I would like to mention briefly some causes of our current problems and to suggest a number of institutional responses designed to cope with unrest and dissention on the campus.

Some Causes of Campus Unrest

There are two major contexts in which the causes of campus unrest must be discussed. One is the society-at-large with its multitudinous social problems, and the second is the college itself. First let us mention some of the dilemmas in our social order. Most authors ascribe the frustrations of students to the war in Viet Nam, continuing racial discrimination, corruption in politics, unethical commercial exploitation of consumers, a breakdown in the American family structure, a continually weakening position of organized religion, and a massive shift in the values of individual citizens. I would like to add to that list of causes

the development of an economy and society based upon the exploitation of scientific knowledge with virtually no commensurate progress made in the application of the social sciences to our political institutions and processes.

Within this larger context, many colleges have serenely drifted along in the same old ways on the implicit assumption that theirs was the best of all possible systems and that the changes taking place on the larger scene would require minor institutional adjustments if any were required at all. Some changes which have taken place on the campus during the last decade have aggravated the incipient frustrations of students to an even greater degree. The flight of professors from the classroom into research and service activities, combined with the massive influx of undergraduates has made the dehumanization of the college experience inevitable. These changes have caused the colleges to field their second team, for the most part young and inexperienced graduate assistants, teaching fellows, and instructors. The freshmen and sophomores taught by these inexperienced young teachers recognize that they are being short-changed.

Although it is difficult to generalize about American college students, there are some discernible changes in them which have had their effect upon interactions between student and institution. For instance, colleges and universities now have students from all socio-economic strata, from the ghetto, the farm, the suburbs, and the factories. Most of these students come to the campus with the best of

intentions. Many of them recognize the inevitable necessity of completing some post-secondary study if they are to achieve an acceptable level of occupational competence. Too often, however, they find courses that have questionable relevance to present day problems and concerns, and they find many artificial hurdles which seem designed to eliminate rather than include as many as possible.

After being bombarded for years with the necessity of higher education for personal and occupational fulfillment, a significant number of students become victims of what can almost be characterized as an anxiety neurosis resulting from continued exhortations to continue in higher education in spite of a rising tide of barriers, such as higher admissions standards and limited enrollments, and tortuous bureaucratic hurdles that I have just mentioned within the college itself.

On a number of university campuses protesting students have been joined by junior faculty members who are disenchanted with a system in which they are accorded inferior professional status and little or no power in the governance of the institution. A small but significant miniority of young faculty are not only frustrated by institutional forms and procedures, but also find in student demonstrations fertile fields for the acting out of their own neurotic needs. When faculty and students join in protest, whatever their motivations, a college can be completely paralyzed.

Institutional Responses

It should be obvious to all that any college may find itself attempting to cope with student disruption at any time. Although not as well publicized, there have been a number of serious confrontations on the campuses of two-year colleges, and it is probable that there will be many more before some reasonable social and political equilibrium is restored. The question to which constructive thinking should be addressed is: What conditions and relationships should be developed on the campus to diminish or eliminate the causes of student unrest?

The first institutional response, which will of necessity be interwoven with a number of following recommendations, is the need for a thorough and critical examination of the educational philosophy of the college, its educational missions, and an examination of the extent to which the community, trustees, administrators, faculty, and students understand these central concepts. Some of the questions which must be answered are the following.

1. What is the philosophical stance of this college? Traditional? Liberal? A mix of these two?
2. Is the college truly student-oriented, or is there actually an emphasis upon the welfare of the professional staff and upon the status quo in the curriculum and instructional methods?

3. Are the educational missions of the college clearly defined and communicated to students and faculty?
4. Are the stated functions of the college appropriate for the population being served?
5. To what extent, and in what ways, can and should the college be involved in questions of social, political, and economic reform in the larger community?
6. Finally, is there general concensus in all segments of the community relative to these questions?

The answers to these questions are not easy, and the processes necessary to find answers are even more complex. Unprecedented changes in personal values and attitudes are taking place in the United States, and a concensus for any point of view is very difficult to achieve. Regardless of the difficulties involved, such critical analysis of basic issues is absolutely essential. In the absence of such thinking and reappraisal by responsible elements in the college and community, there is every likelihood that extremists of both the right and left will fill the vacuum.

The seemingly bland questions posed above, and the process of critical analysis, hide in them more than meets the eye. If these questions are explored in more than a superficial way, those who participate in the discussions must face the pain resulting from a change in their own tightly held opinions and prejudices. Each of

us is simultaneously the beneficiary and victim of our limited insights and life experiences. It is, therefore, difficult for us to effectively internalize the needs of others in an emotional way. Essential changes in colleges can only come after such deep introspection and objective analysis of the interrelationships among the college as an organization and the people being served by it.

Some community colleges have set forth their educational aims and how they are to be accomplished in succinct terms. They are (1) the development of intellectual competence, (2) a mature life style appropriate to the present and the future, (3) occupational competence, and (4) responsible behavior as a citizen in the academic community and the larger society. These objectives define the educational services for which such colleges were originally organized, and, properly interpreted, it is clear that community colleges are not arenas in which our current social ills will be solved. No doubt community colleges can contribute to the solutions of social and economic inequities, but they are not instruments for immediate social change.

The tribe-like banding together of students into loose and shifting coalitions on the basis of "issues" has raised questions as to the efficacy of traditional student personnel services as they now exist in community colleges. Originally conceived as providing non-academic services to students outside the classroom, it is

entirely possible that, as presently organized, student personnel services and counseling are not relevant to the times. There is ample evidence that the staffs responsible for guidance and counseling, student activities, and related functions have not been effective in dealing with student unrest. The students, in many instances, simply ignore these staffs and occupy the president's office. That's where the action is, and that is where the decisions are made. Don't bother us with deans or counselors.

The shifting sands of permissiveness on campus have rather effectively isolated student personnel people from meaningful interaction with students. These professionals suffer from outmoded education, training, and behavior patterns which have only limited significance on the campus today. Who is interested in counseling and facing one's personal psychological problems when there is a peer group which can provide exciting "action", and which makes it unnecessary for one to try to find solutions to one's own personality problems. It's a lot less painful to attack the administration or "the system" for real or imagined defects than to face the painful analysis essential to the development of an acceptable self-concept.

Heresy though it is, I am suggesting that colleges had better carefully reconsider the organization and application of the guidance services as they are now related to this generation of students, and

to succeeding waves of students who will be even more sophisticated and aggressive than those now in college. The old forms, attitudes, and domination of students by adults is ended. New approaches based upon adult relationships between college staff and students is the principle of the future. The dean of men and dean of women are dead. Long live the deans!

What can be done now? Professional personnel can hand the routine clerical work and paper shuffling to competent clerical workers and the computer. They can get out of their offices and mingle with students. They must be effectively concerned with students, their feelings, frustrations, and legitimate complaints. Given this, their recommendations must be heard and responded to by the college administration and trustees.

These days, students must be accepted and treated as adults. This does not imply that the generally accepted rules of adult behavior should be abandoned, but rather that students should be encouraged by every possible means to take responsibility for their own acts, both individually and in groups. Students can be responsible for budgeting activity funds, social activities, dress, campus discipline, and many other important aspects of campus life.

Another weak link in the structure of colleges is the business-oriented, educationally naive board of trustees. Traditionally, American colleges have been governed by lay boards of trustees

representing business, industrial, and professional groups. The contributions of these individuals to the growth and vitality of colleges must not be denigrated, for their influence and foresight has been a significant factor in the development of the most comprehensive and effective system of higher education in the world. But students today are asking that trustees take on an additional dimension of responsibility: a greater understanding of educational processes, and a sharing of decision making with faculty and students.

The first step in this process of changing the role of the board of trustees is the expansion of their knowledge about the characteristics of the students being served, the expansion of their understanding of curricula, and the revitalization of their concern with teaching methods. For too long, trustees have been concerned with buildings and budgets, and have been generally unmindful of the essence of education, the teaching-learning process. Admittedly, trustees cannot and should not be professional educators, but they should spend time and effort evaluating the educational outcomes of the colleges for which they are responsible.

The second responsibility which will probably be more difficult for trustees to accept is the need for revision of college governance to include faculty and students. Grassroots democracy has been an American ideal for 250 years, but it has only been

achieved in a few extraordinary instances. Student rebellion in the United States and other countries has been sparked time after time because students reject the outmoded concept that the conditions of their servitude are dictated by others. And it has been convenient and advantageous for some faculty to unite with students in order to bring their particular grievances to the attention of college governing bodies.

On this point, of course, one must be careful to delineate the areas of responsibility with which students and faculty can legitimately be concerned. There are some legal limitations and practical considerations which must be taken into account, e.g., ownership of property, control of college funds, and the execution of other legally mandated responsibilities. However, the sharing of power, or at least trustee responsiveness to the recommendations of students and faculty, is a reality that trustees must face, and quickly.

Last, it is essential that students, faculty, administrators, and trustees collectively develop policies and procedures for the governance of academic affairs, conditions of employment for faculty, and college-student relationships. Development of policies and procedures by these four groups in cooperation gives all of them a "piece of the action", and with self-interest comes concern for the welfare of the college. That which I have helped build I will not destroy. The process of developing these essential policies is in itself a learning experience for all who are involved.

Policies and procedures governing the college should be carefully developed before a crisis takes place. Rational thinking is difficult or impossible when the house is on fire. Properly developed, this aspect of the college will reflect the consent of the governed and will provide for due process for individuals who have violated the rules of the academic community. (See appendix) Due process has been made a requirement of college governance by general usage on campus and by the Federal courts. In the absence of due process state or federal courts may intervene.

Every college should have a strong student government, and a faculty organized into appropriate committees. The governance of today's college should be based on four groups, freely interacting with one another - trustees, administration, faculty, and students. It is important to define the areas in which students will be consulted and invited to advise in institutional policy making. Equally so is the necessity of a clear definition of the faculty's role. The processes made possible by such an organization give all participants a feeling of meaningful interaction. Most importantly, the institution will cease to be segmented into adversary groups.

Although I am reluctant to end on a pessimistic note, it seems apparent that if dissenting students wish to interrupt the legitimate activities of a college, they will do so despite any machinery designed

to promote rational decision making. A very small minority of students and ex-students have as their goal either the destruction of institutions of higher education, or they are bent on converting our colleges into bases of political power on the South American model. Unreasonable demands by students or faculty cannot be negotiated. As a last resort, colleges cannot hesitate to use civil and criminal law enforcement agencies to protect the civil rights of the majority.

Summary

There are profound changes taking place in society today. Colleges have no choice but to respond to these changes with immediacy but not panic, with imagination but not fear, and with flexibility but not rigidity. It is clear, at least to me, that a small minority made up of students and militant groups in the community, are attacking society through one of its most vulnerable points, schools and colleges. This phase will pass, for the majority will shortly insist that its members also have rights which must not be destroyed by the minority.

Thoughtful students and faculty have pointed out some of the weaknesses of colleges. They have laid bare some of the absurdities and contradictions which we have assumed were educationally sound. Now is the time for change, rational reasoned change, which will make it possible for all to experience an individually fulfilling educational experience.

APPENDIX

Student Disciplinary Procedure

STUDENT DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

The disciplinary procedure outlined in this proposal is designed to treat instances of student violations of college rules and regulations, excluding student behavior as a part of academic performance in the classroom or in preparation for class and laboratory assignments. Student behavior in the classroom or in the performance of academic work remains a matter for the concern of individual faculty members.

College publications which contain reference to college rules and regulations are the College Catalog, the Student Handbook, and "Statement of Policies and Procedures for Student Organizations."

Disciplinary Structure and Procedure

A hearing committee shall be established to consist of two members of the faculty and three members of the student body. From within this total membership of five, a chairman will be selected. All members of the committee, including the chairman, shall have equal voting rights. Members of the faculty may be selected to serve on the hearing committee by any means approved by the Faculty Council, and student members may be selected by any means approved by the Student Government Association. (Ideally, these faculty members and students would not be serving in other committees or organizations concerned with governance in order to broaden the base of participation in maintaining student life.) This hearing committee would replace the student court now established and maintained within the framework of the constitution of the Student Government Association. This replacement of the student court will gain the advantage of the judgment and prestige of a body selected by both faculty and students. Because of its broader representation, the hearing committee should have the power to take final action in disciplinary cases brought before it subject only to an appeal procedure to be outlined in later paragraphs.

Procedure

Disciplinary action may be initiated by a complaint, in writing, filed by any member of the college community, including members of the faculty and the student body. The complaint must be filed with the Dean of Students, who will launch an immediate investigation of the complaint and will simultaneously inform the hearing committee. The purpose of the investigation is to determine if subsequent disciplinary procedures are justified.

He will also ascertain whether or not the student charged with the complaint is sufficiently stable, psychologically, to be accountable for the incident and to stand before the hearing committee. The Dean of Students will call upon the counseling psychologist or any other professionally involved people for any needed consultation in making this joint decision. Certain incidents may be of such a nature that the primary concern during disciplinary action may be for the welfare of the student against whom a complaint has been lodged; others may suggest that the welfare of the college community must be of immediate concern. Pathological causes of behavior should be treated by counseling or psychotherapy, accompanied by continued student attendance or by suspension of the student from the college. In any event, this type of student should not be subjected to the normal procedure of the private hearing of the hearing committee. The Dean will have the prerogative of the following courses of action:

1. For minor offenses, he may issue warnings.

2. For major offenses, he will refer the case to the hearing committee.

3. For major offenses, he may temporarily suspend the student from attending classes for a period not to exceed five class days in order to gain knowledge of the student's behavior or to obtain psychological or medical opinion about the student.

With any one course of action, the student has the right to request, in writing, that a hearing be held. This request is made to the Dean of Students.

Whether or not the Dean finds the complaint worthy of continued disciplinary action, he will prepare a written report to the complainant. If the Dean decides that the case should be submitted to the hearing committee, a written statement of the alleged violation will be presented to the student. The student shall acknowledge receipt of the written statement in writing to the Dean of Students. A copy of the complaint, the Dean's findings, and the written statement to the student with the student's acknowledgment of receipt will be presented to the hearing committee for its consideration. Prior to the hearing in cases involving unmarried minors, the parents will be notified of the charges at the discretion of the Dean of Students.

The hearing committee will ordinarily require that the student alleged to have violated the code of conduct appear before them. They may also hear any witnesses brought by the complainant or by the student. The student will

be given the right to an open hearing, unless he requests that the hearing be conducted as a closed hearing. (If a hearing cannot be conducted in an orderly manner, the committee reserves the right to adjourn the open hearing and reconvene in a closed hearing. In such a closed hearing, each participant will be present with his designated counsel and two observers.) Each participant will be responsible for the conduct of his observers and designated counsel. The committee may also hear any witnesses brought by the complainant or by the student. The student will be given the opportunity to cross-examine any complainant and witnesses at the hearing. The student will have the right to counsel to enable him to prepare his defense.

After considering the allegation and hearing all evidence and opinions, the hearing committee will decide upon its action. Their majority decision will be in the form of a written statement signed by the chairman of the hearing committee. Any decision of the committee, except acquittal, would indicate that the student's behavior was a violation of the code of the college regulations. Their decision will include one of the following actions:

1. Acquittal. Acquittal would indicate that the student has been found "not guilty" of the charge. The student will be eligible to make up any work lost.

2. Warning to the student. This warning must include the conditions which it involves concerning subsequent student behavior.

3. Disciplinary probation. This form of probation must include the conditions of probation and its termination.

4. Suspension from the college. The statement would include any conditions that the student must meet in order to become eligible for readmission to the college.

5. Dismissal from the college. Dismissal from the college can never be indefinite but must contain a specified minimum period.

A stenographic report or a taped recording of the hearing conducted by the hearing committee will be maintained and a copy filed in the confidential disciplinary records held by the Dean of Students. The chairman will inform the student and the Dean of Students, in writing, of the action taken by the hearing committee. The Dean will provide follow-up counseling to enable the student to understand his behavior, the implication of the committee's action, and to assist him to plan constructive course(s) of action.

Appeal

The student shall be informed by the chairman of the hearing committee of the student's right to present an appeal to the decision of the hearing committee. An appeal must be filed within fourteen (14) calendar days from the time a decision has been arrived at by the hearing committee and the student has been duly notified of the decision in order for the appeal to be considered. In cases involving suspension or dismissal, the appeal board will review such appeals to determine if there is cause to believe a hearing is justified. Such appeal must be aimed to show that:

1. The facts as accepted by the hearing committee are untrue.

2. The action taken by the hearing committee was unusually harsh in terms of similar precedent cases.

3. Due process was denied the student during the investigation of the case and/or during the subsequent hearing by the hearing committee.

The appeal board will consist of the President of the College, the President of the Student Government Association, the President of the Faculty Council, a member of the Board of Trustees, the Chairman of the Hearing Committee, and the Dean of Students. The opinion expressed by the appeal board shall be final and not subject to further appeal.

Readmission Procedure

Any student having been suspended or dismissed from the college for disciplinary reasons shall be required to appear before the appeal board before a readmission decision will be rendered. The board shall determine the terms and conditions of readmission or denial of readmission.

Records

For all complaints heard by the hearing committee which result in decisions other than acquittal, the Dean of Students shall maintain records which may be reviewed only by the Dean of Students and the hearing committee or by persons authorized by them for any of several reasons. A copy of the action taken by the hearing committee shall be placed in the student's folder and also located in a discipline file maintained by the Dean of Students. These records shall be reviewed once each semester and removed from the student's personal folder when the period of the committee's action has expired. Under no circumstances will a notation of disciplinary action appear on the student's permanent academic record.

Student Organizations

Disciplinary action may be taken against student organizations as well as individual students. If the student organization is thought to be in violation of college regulations, the hearing committee may decide to hear the complaint. Student organizations may receive from the hearing committee, as a result of charges brought against them, official warning, placement on social probation, or revocation of their charter.

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